



CHAPBOOK

Good Ol' Days

"There was a time when 30 steps wasn't a problem. In fact, I could have run them backwards with my eyes closed", She said while grabbing on to the young gentleman's arm.

"Those were the good ol' days. Now this two inch curb could stop me from getting to church." She climbs into the backseat of the car.

"Thank the Lord i no longer believe in loving God from a church. You can pray anywhere and he can hear you. Did you know that? Even from the bathro...Anyway" the lady gives a good chuckle.

"My late husband was a farmer. I wasn't much for farming. Whats that saying? Don't put all your hens in one fox hole? Something along those lines. I don't think you can say you have lived on a farm if you haven't been chased home by coyotes. Have you ever been chased by a coyote? Never got home faster. I use to tell my children you don't have to be the fastest. You just cant be the slowest.

I'm kidding of course. I love all of my children. I even lived with my daughter for a time. She was so gracious but i know when its time to leave the nest. Not everyone knows when to move forward . Too much change in life to not know. I have been widowed twice. My children have grown. I cant walk like i use to. Life can sure be scary.

OH, I have so many stories to tell. I have been told i could write a book. Maybe one day."

"Oh, young man this is my stop. Mqueen Lodge. My new home. They have bingo here. You know i have never played before? An old lady like me. who would have thunk it but for 10 cents a card i cant go wrong." She reaches for the mans arm and steps outside of the car.

"Hand me my walker, please. today I get to find the new good ol' days.

Nadine Hunt for Joan Boute

Survival Dance

Magpie, yes. Bury your slender feet
in a fresh sleeve of Sunday snow,
hop along a narrow pathway, gnarled with ice;
caw into this afternoon of amber sunlight,
sour your black mouth on the gush of cold berries

and I will make morning
following you into this survival dance.

In my neighbour's yard, magenta blossoms hang on,
rowed like supple soldiers even as snow falls relentlessly through dawn.
I watch wind lift their petals; chart seasons by how their stems lean.

These are the dances tuning my hours. When a maple is drilled, tapped for its syrup
I hear it wince.

If a body falls in India, my fingers tremor.
If anywhere, legions march toward war, I feel the cold air on their necks,
see gunmetal glint against their brown hands. If an admiral shouts *attention*
in preparation for a blood-spilling ritual, I am at attention, too.

My foot lifts into the rhythm of grief.

I dance for the feathers of corvids, but slink, too
in the music violence makes: bullet shells singing like tiny bells
in dry earth.

Brandon Wint for Pramila Sinha

How to Dismantle a Metal Hawk from Memory

find yourself in Eugene, Oregon

with a pilot that laughs like a dolphin when he flies. picture the blue of his eyes
and start swimming.

you know men who built up masculinity like IKEA furniture but he is not one of
them. He is a patchwork plane,

a tapestry of jetstream and aviation maps and a kindness that reminds you of
birds feeding their young.

his nest is not lingering in the tallest spruce

it elevates over the Willamette River, or Fern Ridge.

in your mind, its Lake O'hara on a Sunday morning and he is sleeping in the
hangar.

you pull at his tail and begin unfastening the bolts holding this bird together.

you are not the mouse that scampers in undergrowth, though you know what it
is

to hide in the hovel of your mind.

it's the same as soaring with no landing gears, there is no intention of coming
down.

divisions dances between the mountaintop and the teal lake beds at your feet.

you see yourself, synonymous with both, eyes memorizing

the green sheen of dawn reflected off sheet metal. the sharpness of honed talons
tacked to the grit of landing strips.

when you come back to earth - which you have, time after time, letting go of the
yoke

with the promise of tasting the midsection of a rainbow, full gradient of dawn,

from yellow sun to dark blue - when you land, there is no need for the word
"prey" anymore.

Liam Coady for Rusty Lee Hay

A child's first act is to cause its mother great pain.
We spend our lives atoning for that violence.

Even so we will again and again
in seasons of unknowing and in wilful rebellion
heap up with miseries and griefs
the plate of her life.

Yet in a mother's love, we ourselves are found.
How often does she suffer in solidarity with the bruised knee,
the broken heart,
the fearful and uncertain mind.
When we love our mothers, we love the world,
for the light of her soul
shines through every eye,
our shared mystery that
every night -
blinks
- and is remembered for a dreaming instant
then dissolved in bird song at dawn when
we flit back to our dancing bodies to be
alone together
for the moment of our lives.

In the end we all return to our mother,

children once again,
to be embraced in her earthen arms,
forgiven.

Colin Matty for Shirley Hamaluk

Ti-boy / diamond

can you tell me how it ended water tower sawn off gun
was it a car crash or a drowning muddy dying mother
crying Ti-boy eleven sealed confession silence
leaden shame locked in

three years ago Ti-boy appears i dream him age 11
a mystery that still haunts me from the time when i was 7
our child days i prayed to him in Heaven

as a girl *St. Paul Bonjour! les prêtres bonnes soeurs*
français in school *moi—six de treize mes frères mes soeurs*
moi—papa's préférée though my dad pretended to chastise me

i was wild hard to tame my spirit burned and questions pained me
who? or what? and why? this, really? how? how come?
—they tried to groom me shame they dealt me buckets truckloads
nice girl? *b'an non*—i got in trouble still here i sit
i'm 80 now and dreams of dead boy furrow brow

my husband died 5 years ago i couldn't breathe i couldn't rise
couldn't bear to open my eyes but then it came the way it does
a way to carry on our love each Sunday i sit and write him
all my thoughts my troubles joys the latest death that lost Ti-boy
we share precious moments live in interstitial spaces give
one another comfort still we connect we always will

when i was 7 Ti-boy 11 *mon père était vice-principal* "that boy
was trouble" just like me but he went off and died and something
changed in my insides *papa disait que Ti-boy était* "so spirited, outspoken"
i wondered hard —what drove this kid? and why does no-one give
straight answers one sister said —a sawn-off shotgun one brother swore

silence now i seek in temples i prefer to walk reversed. i've never taken easy routes
—not once. i walked behind the hearse

i walk against the grain
ignited by my joy my pain
that's who i am
whom i've become

why tell you of this loss this story gory details so long ago far back
because my dreams won't let my rest because *je sais que mon marie*
—he has my back

the question haunts me as i wake i search for clues to answer him
a boy a girl and now me 80 sacred quests i seek to fulfill

i have allies prayers and bells. archives people i can ask i seek the truth i always
have i love my husband love my dad remember how he said —so clearly
i can hear his timbre —husky when he spoke of Ti-boy to me baseball diamonds
after school [he speaks to Ti-boy to me]dad played catch with that tough kid
those two had rhythm ballroom dancers —i was mesmerized by them
papère said "sure Ti-boy broke rules, was trouble —how often did he sit detention?
but when he plays ball. the gods surrender
Mon Dieu! that kid could throw!

I don't care
if he broke rules
cause boy that boy could throw

Kathy Fisher for Adele Fontaine